GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:6339
ANSWERED ON:12.04.2017
Fake News via WhatsApp
Jaiswal Dr. Sanjay

Will the Minister of ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

Will the Minister of Electronics and Information Technology be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government is aware of the serious implications arising due to spread of fake news via private WhatsApp networks; and

(b) if so, the details thereof along with the steps taken by the government to address the issue?

Answer

(a): Instances of circulation of fake news/rumour mongering have come to the notice of the Government from time to time. Such behaviour in cyberspace is facilitated by virtual and borderless nature of the technology.

(b): Whenever any inflammatory harmful and hateful contents on various social networking sites is brought to the notice of the Government by the Security/Intelligence Agencies, action under Section 69A of the Information Technology Act, 2000 is taken in the interest of Sovereignty and Integrity of India, defence of India, security of the State, friendly relations with foreign States or public order or for preventing incitement to the commission of any cognizable offence relating to above. On a case-to-case basis, social media platforms are approached for removal/blocking of specific contents.

The Information Technology (IT) Act, 2000 has provisions for removal of objectionable online content. Also the Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines) Rules 2011 under section 79 of the IT Act requires that the Intermediaries shall observe due diligence while discharging their duties and shall inform the users of computer resources not to host, display, upload, modify, Publish, transmit, update or share any information that is harmful, objectionable, affect minors and unlawful in any way.

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